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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: CAMPAIGN TO OUST PRESIDENT CHEN SHUI-BIAN,
DOS INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM REPORT, CROSS-STRAIT RELATIONS

¶1. Summary: As the campaign to oust President Chen Shui-bian stayed in the Taiwan media's spotlight September 19, news coverage also focused on the new legislative session, which began today; clashes that broke out between pro-Chen and anti-Chen protesters in Kaohsiung Monday; and the imported fresh spinach from the U.S. said to be contaminated with E.Coli. The pro-independence "Liberty Times," Taiwan's largest circulating daily, ran a banner headline on page four that read "Red Plans Besiege the Presidential Office On Double Ten Day; Green to Counterattack by Expanding Support for Nativism."

¶2. In terms of editorials and commentaries, an analysis in the pro-status quo "China Times" discussed the possibility of whether elites in the Green camp will join the campaign to oust President Chen in the wake of the high-profile "Oust Bian" parade on September 15. An analysis in the pro-unification "United Daily News" speculated on a possible alliance between former President Lee Teng-hui, Vice President Annette Lu, and Legislative Yuan President Wang Jin-pyng to confront President Chen. An editorial in the limited-circulation, pro-independence, English-language "Taiwan News," on the other hand, discussed the State Department's International Religious Freedom Report, saying human rights should be Asia's common language. An opinion piece by DPP Chairman Yu Shyi-kun in the limited-circulation, pro-independence, English-language "Taipei Times" urged the international community to consider Taiwan "an asset for democratic enlargement and give it firm support against China's threats." End summary.

¶3. Campaign to Oust President Chen Shui-bian

A) "From Siege of the City to Siege of the Presidential Office, Shih is Intensifying Pressure; Can Bian Stand it?"

Journalist Lo Ju-lan noted in an analysis in the pro-status quo "China Times" [circulation: 400,000] (9/19):

"... When it comes to the [mounting] public sentiments as evidenced on the [mass movement] on September 15, the prosecutors' findings will be the key for political elites in the Green camp to decide whether they want to oust Bian. The Presidential Office and some pro-independence seniors, on the other hand, also started to claim in public that Bian should not step down even if [First Lady] Wu Shu-chen is indicted. The Presidential Office is hoping to use such a modus operandi to block the channels that those Green elites may adopt to oust Bian. It is noteworthy, however, that Bian's modus operandi is constantly to change and revise his stories about the SOGO Department Store gift certificates case and the special account for affairs of state case, which is the main reason why he has completely lost public support. If he changes his remarks about whether he should step down again as the case develops, it will

perhaps trigger more outrage from the public and therefore accumulate stronger energy for mass movements. In addition, if Bian, in an attempt to secure his position, continues to make mistakes such as ordering the Green camp to mobilize more crowds, as he did on September 16, the Green heavyweights will prefer to draw a line between themselves and him. ...

"Right now, the rising anti-Bian public sentiment has become a voting issue, to which anyone in the Green camp aspiring to run for the 2008 presidential election has to pay attention. The DPP's survival is of essential importance to these persons' future political careers, and their concerns deepened in the wake of the mass protest march on September 15. ..."

B) "Bian's Powerful Manipulation Makes it Difficult for Lee, Lu and Wang to Form Alliance"

Journalist Ho Ming-kuo said in an analysis in the pro-unification "United Daily News" [circulation: 400,000] (9/19):

"President Chen Shui-bian insists on staying on in his position, while the campaign to oust Bian is gaining more and more momentum. The direction of the three heavyweights, Lee Teng-hui, Annette Lu, and Wang Jin-pyng, is believed to be the key influencing future political developments. There are even people constantly speculating on the possibility of joining these three powers in forming a new political partnership and opening up a new political situation. But under the powerful manipulation of Bian, chances are slim for these powers to join forces at this moment. ...

"When it comes to political manipulation, Lee, Lu, and Wang must all keep a certain space for mobilizing possible threats against Bian in order to create more favorable conditions for their political futures. This explains why, over the past few months, President Chen's team kept on releasing messages about appointing Wang as the next premier and showing extraordinary courtesy to Lu. The movements to oust Bian and to support him are both in high gear now; neither has showed any sign of stopping, and both act like two

trains that are ready to crash into each other. In the meantime, they are accumulating energy for the future. What is most important is that heavyweights in both the ruling and opposition parties are seizing this opportunity to try to press Bian. But Bian's recent remarks show he has no intention to give up so early. As a result, at present there seems to be no resolution to the prevailing sentiments of confrontation."

14. DOS International Religious Freedom Report

"Human Rights Should Be Asia's Common Language"

The pro-independence, English-language "Taiwan News" [circulation: 20,000] editorialized (9/19):

"In its just-released 2006 Report on International Religious Freedom, the United States State Department has listed China as one of the countries with the worst records, naming the People's Republic of China among 'countries of particular concern,' along with Burma, Eritrea, Iran, North Korea, Saudi Arabia, Sudan and Vietnam. ... In recent years, the PRC government has been very flexible in its use of international politics and market opportunities as cards to play with the U.S. and other international players. In apparent consideration of China's market opportunities and Beijing's strategic role in helping the George W. Bush administration fight its 'war on terror,' Washington has refrained from sufficiently pushing the PRC to improve human rights conditions. ...

"As PRC leaders promote the Beijing Olympics as a showcase of the country's social and economic progress and a symbol of China's greater international recognition, it will be interesting to see if the international community will seriously scrutinize the PRC regime's actions in relation to basic rights protection. So far Beijing's progress, as reflected in the U.S. State Department's annual reports on human rights and on the September 15 report on religious freedom, are far from sanguine. In contrast, the USSD report related that Taiwan's constitution provides for freedom of religion and, more importantly, affirmed that the Taiwan

'authorities generally respected this right in practice' and that 'authorities at all levels sought to protect this right in full and did not tolerate its abuse, either by official or private actors.' We believe that Taiwan should take a more proactive stance in pointing out China's notorious records on human rights and the similarities of Beijing's move to suppress the human rights of Taiwan's people by attempting to impose its 'one China' principle and by its blocking our rightful participation in the international community, including in the United Nations and the World Health Organization. ..."

15. Cross-Strait Relations

"China Sans Democracy Is a China Sans Peace"

DPP Chairman Yu Shyi-kun opined in an opinion piece in the pro-independence, English-language "Taipei Times" [circulation: 30,000] (9/19):

"The question of whether China's rise represents an opportunity or a threat to the world has been a topic of heated debate. ... If the KMT wins the 2008 presidential election, I venture to predict that the influence of Chinese nationalism will cause the KMT leadership to move toward a more centered position between China and the US, and weaken the relationship between Taiwan and Japan. This would not only mean that Taiwan will move toward China politically, but also and more importantly that democracy in Taiwan would regress in the same way it has regressed in Hong Kong, leading people to start doubting their faith in democracy. ...

"Taiwan's experience shows that a growing, undemocratic and authoritarian China will wield economic power to damage the democratic system of another country. If it can hurt Taiwan, it can of course do the same to other nations. I believe that China is working to gradually erode the foundations of the alliance of democratic nations established by the US. ... The international community should therefore consider Taiwan as an asset for democratic enlargement and give it firm support against China's threats and the crisis China is creating in Taiwan."

YOUNG